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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BAGHDAD 000410

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [MOPS](#) [PINS](#) [EPET](#) [ENRG](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: IRAQI MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY
DISCUSSES ASSASSINATIONS, OIL INFRASTRUCTURE, OTHER TOPICS

REF: A. A. BAGHDAD 328
[1](#)B. B. BAGHDAD 212
[1](#)C. C. BAGHDAD 344

Classified By: AMBASSADOR ZALMAY KHALILZAD FOR REASONS 1.4 (A), (B), (D)
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[1](#)1. (C//REL GBR AUS) SUMMARY: The Iraqi Ministerial Committee for National Security (MCNS) met the evening of February 6, 2006 at the residence of Prime Minister Ibrahim Ja'afari.

-- MNF-I Commanding General Casey urged the members to address the issue of kidnappings and assassinations about which members of the Sunni political leadership have been complaining; he warned that failure to deal with this issue could jeopardize the progress being made on political inclusion. The members decided to form a committee to investigate these allegations and directed the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and Ministry of Defense (MOD) to Continue to investigate allegations of such events as they become aware of them.

-- Deputy Prime Minister Chalabi gave another presentation on the current oil infrastructure situation. Earlier in the day the Prime Minister had signed an order giving Chalabi authority to take necessary measures to assure the flow of oil and fuel products. After discussion, the committee determined that the threat to the oil infrastructure constitutes a matter of national security and that the Iraqi Government (IG) should approach MNF-I to request that Iraqi Army assets be redirected to provide security to oil infrastructure facilities.

-- Following up on an issue raised at the previous meeting concerning which Ministry exercises control over the National Joint Operations Center (NJOC), it was concluded that NJOC falls under the Minister of State for National Security but that its recently fired commander should be given the opportunity to refute the corruption charges that led to his dismissal.

-- The MCNS approved the MOI security plan for Ashura.

-- Discussion of a security plan for the Tigris River area near Taji was postponed, as it is not yet fully formulated.

-- Ja'afari briefly addressed the issue of Anbar, stating that it makes sense to consider working with tribal leaders in addition to the governor and his security council. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C//REL GBR AUS) Prime Minister Ibrahim Ja'afari

convened the MCNS at his residence the evening of February 6.

Members of the committee present included Minister of Interior Bayan Jabr, Minister of Defense Saadoun Dulime, National Security Advisor Mowwafak al-Rubaie, Minister of State for National Security Affairs Karim al-Anzi, Ambassador Khalilzad, MNF-I Commanding General Casey, and British Ambassador Patey. Deputy Prime Minister Ahmed Chalabi and MNF-I Deputy Commanding General Houghton also were present, as were the Prime Minister's chief of staff and military advisor. Ambassadors Khalilzad and Patey, along with GEN Casey, departed early due to previously scheduled engagements.

SUNNI CONCERNS RE ASSASSINATIONS

13. (C//REL GBR AUS) GEN Casey requested that the MCNS consider and address the allegations made by Sunni leadership figures that members of their community are being systematically kidnapped and executed by men wearing police uniforms and driving what appear to be police vehicles. These complaints were raised most recently at a luncheon hosted by the Ambassador on February 4 (REF A.) GEN Casey noted that since January 1 there have been nearly 90 murders in the Baghdad area, and it appears that at least half of them were executions. Ja'afari recounted the discussions from the Ambassador's lunch, calling it a frank exchange and noting that the Sunni leaders were very concerned by these killings.

Ja'afari said that he shares their concerns but rejected any allegation that government officials were responsible, despite the use of what appear to be police uniforms and vehicles. Although he acknowledged that it is possible that

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low-ranking members of the security forces may be committing crimes on their own, he argued that there is no evidence to show that this is a policy condoned or promoted by high-ranking members of the government. He mentioned the case of a Shia who had been kidnapped and killed by persons wearing police uniforms, intimating that this is not just a Sunni problem.

14. (C//REL GBR AUS) Minister of Interior Jabr reported that he had met with a Sunni leader to discuss the reports of eleven people being killed in a vehicle and fourteen others who had been found murdered. Jabr claimed that the eleven were killed by Coalition Forces (CF), a statement with which GEN Casey took issue, asking that Jabr clarify and provide details. With regard to the fourteen, a committee has been formed to investigate such crimes. Minister of State for National Security al-Anzi said that, since January 1, over 1480 innocent civilians have been killed, and he wondered why everyone was so concerned with this particular group of fourteen people.

15. (C//REL GBR AUS) Minister of Defense Dulime, himself a Sunni, dismissed many of the Sunni leaders as complainers. For example, he said that Ayad Samarie of the Iraqi Islamic Party had called on him, upset because one of the party's buildings was being raided by CF and Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). Dulime said he investigated and learned that: a U.S. soldier on patrol in the area had been shot by a sniper; the area had been cordoned; and all buildings had been searched for the shooter. In the IIP building, ISF found hand grenades, explosives, remote control and communications devices, as well as a sniper rifle with empty shell casings. "They complain about us, but look what we find in their building." Dulime also asserted that the Sunni leaders always make claims of groups of people being rounded up but are unable to provide names or details when asked. "If an accusation is made, evidence must be provided. If the allegation is false, the one making it should be punished."

16. (C//REL GBR AUS) Ambassador Patey told the Iraqis that they were missing the point, particularly al-Anzi and his

remark about the large number of innocent civilians killed: "We know who killed them - terrorists - and we are fighting them. Even though many of the Sunni's claims may be fabricated, you still have a duty to listen and to investigate." Ambassador Khalilzad concurred and emphasized that the seriousness of the matter derives from the fact that it is the government that is being accused of killing people.

These claims must be investigated and, if false, refuted. Ja'afari replied that it is his job to defend his government, and he will not accept as true allegations without evidence that members of his government, including Ministers, are involved in killings. He concluded by stating that the committee to investigate these allegations will look into them and that the Ministries of Interior and Defense have a duty to investigate all such allegations that come to their attention.

OIL INFRASTRUCTURE

17. (C//REL GBR AUS) Following up on a presentation he made to the MCNS on January 22 (REF B), Deputy Prime Minister Chalabi reported again on the status of Iraq's oil infrastructure. He reviewed the fact that crude oil exports are declining and spoke of the recent attack on the new Kirkuk oil processing plant, calling it the most serious attack on oil infrastructure since the liberation and explaining that it will put a major hole in Iraq's oil export plans and forecasts. No oil is flowing from the Kirkuk fields to the Bayji refinery due to pipeline interdictions; Bayji is shut down; and no fuel products are flowing from Bayji to Baghdad. In the south, security is not an issue, but a shortage of tug boats, among other things, is preventing Iraq from exporting the maximum possible quantities of oil. In short, Iraq is failing to meet the International Monetary Fund's standard that it export at least 1.57 million barrels per day, and, at best, Iraq's northern oil imports will be half what had been anticipated, according to Chalabi. With regard to the creation of rapid repair teams, Chalabi told the MCNS that the government, due to opposition from the Ministry of Oil, has failed to establish such teams despite the fact that MNF-I has made arrangements to house them and protect them. He also

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lamented the government's failure to heed his advice months ago to install valves on the pipelines that would enable repairs to be made more quickly.

18. (C//REL GBR AUS) Ambassador told the MCNS that the USG is committed to helping solve this problem. MNF-I Deputy Commanding General Houghton emphasized that the IG must recognize the seriousness of this issue. It is a critical issue that threatens both the credibility of the government and the economic health of the country. If no oil flows, the country will have no income and will not be able to pay for its army or police, which are required for the security of the nation. He also urged the Iraqis to recognize that the problem is not simply one of security. Iraq must achieve a secure and resilient system so that terrorism, corruption, and equipment failure cannot make it fail. Houghton asserted that the IG must acknowledge the criticality of infrastructure integrity and take action by telling MNF-I that this is a major priority that justifies the reassignment of Iraqi Army units to protect oil infrastructure facilities.

He urged that Chalabi be empowered to direct the non-military aspects of this effort, which involves several non-security ministries. (NOTE: At the meeting, Chalabi was provided with a revised order signed by the Prime Minister giving the new committee that Chalabi heads authority to "take all necessary measures" to assure that at least 1.6 million barrels per day are exported. It is not contemplated by anyone that this gives Chalabi authority to direct troops.

END NOTE.) The MCNS agreed that the security priorities of the government must be rebalanced to raise infrastructure

integrity to a higher level. There was a brief discussion of what army units should be deployed where, but Chalabi and Houghton successfully urged the group to leave these decisions to the military authorities.

CONTROL OF NATIONAL JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER

¶9. (C//REL GBR AUS) At the previous MCNS meeting (REF C) GEN Casey had expressed concern that Major General Ghazi, the Iraqi general commanding the NJOC, had been fired and that the NJOC had come under the control of Minister of State for National Security al-Anzi (MSNS). Rubaie explained that the NJOC had, since the Allawi administration, fallen under the MSNS. This might not have been readily apparent due to the fact that the NJOC was staffed by employees from a variety of ministries. Rubaie argued that, because the NJOC is an interagency operation, it is logical that it should be under the control of the MSNS. Al-Anzi justified the firing of Ghazi by citing allegations of financial mismanagement and corruption, and he claimed Ghazi had refused to cooperate with investigators leaving no choice but to remove him. He added that Ghazi's replacement is a fine officer who is doing well and should be left in place, and he asserted that running the NJOC is the most important function of his ministry.

¶10. (C//REL GBR AUS) Ja'afari expressed concern that GEN Casey had raised this issue and was no longer present to discuss it. (NOTE: GEN Casey had departed the meeting prior to this discussion, for a higher-priority prior engagement. END NOTE.) Minister of Interior Jabr speculated that GEN Casey was concerned because an officer he was comfortable working with had been removed without prior notice. Ja'afari also pointed out that questions might arise because Ghazi is a Christian, and some might think he had been removed for this reason. Al-Anzi assured Ja'afari that this was not the case and pointed out that Ghazi had been offered a very good high-ranking position following his dismissal from the NJOC. Nevertheless, Ja'afari concluded that Ghazi must be given the choice of vying for reinstatement. To do so he must contest the corruption allegations made against him. If it is found that evidence is lacking, Ghazi should be given his old job back. Alternatively, he may choose not to fight the charges and accept the new job he has been offered.

SECURITY PLANS

¶11. (C//REL GBR AUS) Jabr provided copies of the MOI's security plan for Ashura, which was approved by the MCNS. The MCNS agreed to postpone discussion of the security plan (which Ja'afari had requested at the last meeting) to deal

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with problems in the Tigris River region near Taji, as the plan is not yet completely formulated.

ANBAR PROVINCE

¶12. (C//REL GBR AUS) Ja'afari advised the MCNS that he would meet the next day with the governor of Anbar Province. He said he had received a letter from fifteen Anbar sheiks who wrote that their views about the province should be considered as well as the Governor's. Ja'afari said the sheiks seemed to be respectable and made some good points; so he will consider whether to deal with them in addition to working with the governor.

COMMENT

¶13. (C//REL GBR AUS) The apparent reluctance of the MCNS to take seriously the allegations made by Sunni leaders about kidnappings and assassinations, true or not, is troubling. We will continue to work to convince Ja'afari and his ministers that, if these allegations are unfounded, the best way to put them to rest is to convincingly investigate and refute them. If they are true, then immediate steps must be taken to put a stop to them and to punish those responsible. With regard to energy infrastructure, the delegation of additional powers to Chalabi is encouraging, as is the determination to reorder security priorities to move infrastructure higher up the list. However, we can't help but think that members of the MCNS still fail to grasp the reality of the situation they face. During the meeting, the lights flickered and went out, plunging the room into darkness for a few minutes. The conversation continued as if nothing were amiss. Several minutes later, Chalabi received a note telling him an explosion, possibly a car bomb, had just detonated near the Doura power station. He made a call and announced that the electrical system had tripped and the entire country was blacked out. (NOTE: MNF-I was unable to confirm that an explosion had occurred. Later reports indicated the system was tripped due to a line malfunction caused by a combination of wind, dust, and corrosion. END NOTE.) Rubaie joked that Chalabi was an "alarmist", and he and Jabr argued that a nation-wide blackout is simply impossible. Until the Iraqi leadership opens its eyes to the situation it faces, attempts to get the IG to take real action to address the infrastructure problem will remain difficult.

KHALILZAD